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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/600,117	06/20/2003	John Stanley Lovell	2060-92	9132
22442	7590	05/17/2006		
SHERIDAN ROSS PC 1560 BROADWAY SUITE 1200 DENVER, CO 80202			EXAMINER WOOD, ELIZABETH D	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1755	

DATE MAILED: 05/17/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/600,117	LOVELL ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Elizabeth D. Wood	1755	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 February 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-50 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 5, 14-25 and 39-50 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 7-13, 26-28 and 30-38 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 6 and 29 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Specification

The examiner has not checked the specification to the extent necessary to determine the presence of **all** possible minor errors (grammatical, typographical and idiomatic). Cooperation of the applicant(s) is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant(s) may become aware of in the specification, in the claims and in any future amendment(s) that applicant(s) may file.

Applicant(s) is also requested to complete the status of any copending applications referred to in the specification by their Attorney Docket Number or Application Serial Number, **if any**.

The status of the parent application(s) and/or any other application(s) cross-referenced to this application, **if any**, should be updated in a timely manner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 11 and 30 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

These claims remain rejected to the reasons of record. The section of the MPEP in the previous office action does discuss Markush language, contrary to applicant's assertions. It specifically states that in Markush groups "consisting of" may not be replaced by "comprising". This is because such a change would open the group up to

other components. Accordingly, since "consisting essentially of" is also open language, it stands to reason that this terminology would also be improper. The case law cited by applicant stating that "consisting essentially of" is an acceptable expression of a Markush group does not appear relevant.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-4, 7-13 and 26-28 and 30-37 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Shin et al. with Shih et al. to teach an inherent state of fact, for the reasons set forth in the previous office action.

Claims 1-4, 7-13, 26-28, 30-35, 37 and 38 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kametaka et al. with Shih et al. to teach an inherent state of fact, for the reasons set forth in the previous office action.

Claims 1-4, 7-13 and 26-28 and 30-37 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 59-216631 for the reasons set forth in the previous office action.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed February 27, 2006 with respect to the prior art rejections have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The arguments focus on the contention that the examiner ignored the “preferred” method of making the claimed composition and contend that such method would result in a different composition. The declaration accompanying the remarks also presents such arguments. This is not convincing because the instant specification still states that “any suitable technique” that will result in ion exchange is acceptable. Furthermore, applicant argues that the references calcine their compositions and the instant compositions are not calcined. However, it is pointed out that the instantly claimed process does not preclude calcinations steps, and the product claims as presented also do not refer to an uncalcined material. Accordingly, the claims are not commensurate in scope with the arguments being presented. Applicant further comments that the references do not teach vermiculite. However, it is pointed out that the claims are not all limited to vermiculite and therefore are properly rejectable over the substrates of the references.

The dependent claim limitations were considered by the examiner in the previous office action. As pointed out therein, however, absent a convincing showing that the methods for producing the compositions result in a distinctly different composition, the examiner considers such features inherent.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 6 and 29 are objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Elizabeth D. Wood whose telephone number is 571-272-1377. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 5:30-2:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jerry Lorengo can be reached on 571-272-1233. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1755

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Elizabeth D. Wood
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1755

edw